

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Extension Service  
Washington, 25, D. C.

LETTER NO. 19

July 30, 1947

For your information

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TO STATE FARM LABOR SUPERVISORS OF FLORIDA, GEORGIA, SOUTH CAROLINA, NORTH CAROLINA, VIRGINIA, MARYLAND, DELAWARE, PENNSYLVANIA, NEW JERSEY, NEW YORK, CONNECTICUT, TENNESSEE, AND OHIO

Subject: Atlantic Coast Migratory Movement

STATUS QUO

Since the last News Letter went out we have had numerous telephone contacts with farm labor personnel in Virginia, Maryland, Delaware and New Jersey. Pittman has returned from a 10 day tour of farm labor centers in New York State, and Andersen has completed a trip through the Eastern Shore counties of Maryland, Delaware and New Jersey. Information gleaned from these contacts and reports indicates to us here that the area embodied in these States continues to be the "hot spot" in the East Coast Migratory Region. No important changes in the general situation have taken place.

AS WE SEE IT HERE there will be no serious shortage or surplus of migrant labor in this region during the next two weeks. In making this statement we are aware of the fact that 300 additional migrants may be needed for tomato picking in the Virginia Shore counties; that some potato pickers will be released from Somerset County, Maryland, and that there are and will be some demands for additional sweet corn and tomato pickers in some localities in Maryland, Delaware and New Jersey. Placement officials in these States are working together as a team and trying to keep the labor supply balanced. O. W. Nealy is located at Pocomoke Camp in Maryland and will maintain contacts with the other States. Nealy is confronted with the dual task of helping move some crews while at the same time persuading others to stay on the job.

Potato harvest should get under way in New Jersey and Long Island within the week. At the same time tomato picking in the canning localities will open up. And right now it looks like lots of tomatoes--also sweet corn. If the market holds a shortage of pickers might develop; if the market breaks there may be too many.

Last week a lot of crews were on the road. A lot of them were just traveling with no definite work agreement destination. The reports received here on 36 crews leaving Princess Anne County, Virginia, show that 25 of these crews, totaling 813 workers, had no definite job ahead of them. Fourteen of these crews were going to New Jersey and 11 to New York. These crews had all been picking potatoes and apparently had no interest in working in tomatoes or sweet corn. When these crews settle down and tomato, potato and sweet corn harvest really get under way, we will know how big the big problem is--namely, how many workers will be available for the heavy demand from New York which should be pretty clearly defined by August 15.

APROPPOS OF THE NEW YORK SITUATION let's hear what C. W. E. Pittman, just back from his 10 day tour with Seymour Vaughan and Merle Stout, has to say about it. Apparently in agreement with our statement above, Pitt says, "Within the next ten days the need for migrants in New York will mount rapidly and all our facilities will be taxed to find them."



Commenting on the present situation there, he has this to say: "Temporarily there is a good balance between migrants needed and migrants available. Recently there has been a lull in activity in several areas, and the problem has been to provide "fill in" jobs and get workers to stay until steady harvest work develops. Where employers failed to do this the labor has been lost and recruitment will have to start all over again."

Pittman was impressed by the evidence of close cooperation between Seymour Vaughan and Merle Stout, and O. W. Nealy representing our staff in the southern States, and placement men in States where workers were completing contracts. Vaughan and Stout in New York maintain daily telephone contact with Nealy and the program of referring crews without late summer and fall contracts to farmers without workers for that part of the season, is working out very well. Practically all requests for migrants have been filled promptly. Says Pitt, "It has been a good demonstration of what team work between areas of need and areas of supply can accomplish."

BACK FROM NEW JERSEY, after a 3 day tour with "Jock" Taylor, H. O. Andersen reports some surplus of small crews looking for work. Potato pickers are arriving in advance of work opportunities. C. L. Mundy and Clarence Perrine, Farm Labor Assistants, have referred some crews to Long Island, directed other crews to stay out of the area until work develops, and have made numerous local placements. The critical period in New Jersey will develop about August 5 when potato picking really gets under way.

IT IS MOST IMPORTANT NOW for placement men, farm labor assistants, county agents and state supervisors in the States in the area to keep in constant touch with each other. To speed up placement they should send definite written requests for labor to each other as far as possible in advance of the actual need. Similarly they should send notices of crews finishing contracts and available for future employment. This office will keep informed of situations throughout the area and distribute general, and whenever possible, specific information about supply and demand for migrant labor.

The following list gives names of key placement men and others, in addition to State Supervisors, who are in the best position to cooperate in making placements and referrals:

Virginia Shore:

Alex G. Dunton  
Farm Labor Assistant  
Cheritan Camp  
Eastville, Virginia  
Phone- Cape Charles 276-W

Carl Arvin  
Farm Labor Assistant  
Accomac Camp  
Accomac, Virginia  
Phone- Onancock 198-J

Maryland Shore:

William L. Hillman  
Farm Labor Assistant  
Pocomoke Camp  
Pocomoke City, Md. - Phone - Pocomoke 410

O. W. Nealy, Farm Labor Assistant, will be located at Pocomoke camp during August.

New Jersey

C. L. Mundy  
Farm Labor Assistant  
40 South Street  
Freehold, New Jersey  
Phone- Freehold 80663

Clarence Perrine  
Farm Labor Assistant  
Poultry Auction Market  
Hightstown, New Jersey  
Phone- Hightstown 1019



Delaware

W. H. Henderson  
County Agent  
Georgetown, Delaware  
Phone- Georgetown 21

F. P. Neylan  
Farm Labor Assistant  
Dover, Delaware  
Phone- Dover 2886

Kenneth Branner  
Farm Labor Assistant  
Middletown Camp  
Middletown, Delaware  
Phone- Middletown 92

New York: Seymour Vaughan, Assistant State Supervisor  
Merle Stout, Farm Labor Assistant  
Extension Service  
New York State College of Agriculture  
Ithaca, New York - Phone Ithaca 3331

This list is based on latest information in our files. We will be glad to publish corrections or additions.

AND NOW WE REGRET to report that C. W. E. Pittman will have to go to the hospital July 31 for another eye operation and will be away for at least three weeks. We'll miss him in the office, and know that you will miss his philosophy and experienced guidance in the Weekly News Letter. In the meantime we'll carry on. We'd like some suggestions as to what should go into the letters to make them more useful. We've purposely avoided statistics these last two weeks because we didn't feel that they meant much until things settle down a bit. We would like to avoid "preaching" and too much in an editorial vein. What we would like to do is to get out a letter based on news --news that will facilitate the most efficient distribution and use of migrant labor. To do that we need reports from the States - on Monday preferably - not later than noon Tuesday. Can we count on someone from your State giving us such a report by telephone or telegram, each week for the next two months? Laurels to Paul Nystrom of Maryland for doing just that for the last two months.

Very truly yours,



Alex D. Cobb  
Northeastern Area Director  
Recruitment and Placement Division  
Extension Farm Labor Program

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